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# Student perceptions of intrusive and non-intrusive advising approaches

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*Eastern Illinois University*

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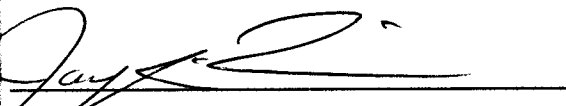
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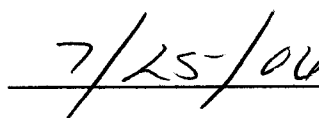
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**Student Perceptions of Intrusive and Non-Intrusive Advising Approaches**

BY

JOSEPHINE ROBINSON

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN COLLEGE STUDENT AFFAIRS  
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY CHARLESTON, IL

2006

I HEARBY RECOMMEND THAT THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULLFILLING  
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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master of Science  
in Education Degree  
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*This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Dorothy Lee Robinson.  
I love you!*

*"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart;  
and lean not unto thine own understanding.  
In all thy ways acknowledge him,  
and he shall direct thy paths"*

*Proverbs 3:5-6*

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## ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of the present study was to assess students' perceptions of intrusive advisement approaches used by Gateway Program staff at Eastern Illinois University in comparison to non-intrusive advisement approaches utilized by faculty advisors in academic departments. To date, no research has been conducted in this area at this institution. A secondary purpose of the present study was to ascertain the perceptions of students regarding their student/advisor relationships and the knowledge levels of advisors regarding the university and degree requirements. A third purpose for the present study was to assess students' perceptions of the effects academic advisement had on their matriculation behavior and success in fulfilling degree requirements. The sample population for the present study consisted of former Gateway students admitted during the fall 2002 semester. At the time of the study, these students had declared majors and currently met with faculty advisors within their academic degree programs. The method of data collection consisted of one-on-one interviews. An analysis of interview responses facilitated the identification of major themes and related issues. Several conclusions were drawn from the findings. First, students were positively affected by the intrusive advisement approach utilized within the Gateway program. Second, students reported having important personal relationships with both Gateway and faculty advisors. However, students' relationships with faculty advisors primarily depended on each student's perceptions of the amount and quality of time spent with their faculty advisor. The results are presented as discussion of the research questions based on a comparison of the responses of former Gateway participants. Recommendations for future academic department and Gateway Program advisors and future researchers are given.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Many forms of advising exist in every realm of higher education. From financial assistance advising, sorority and fraternity advising, to academic course selection, students look to faculty and staff for guidance and support. Advisement, in general, is an on-going, multifaceted process and is one the most important factors in a student's academic career. The most popular forms of academic advising are "Intrusive" and "Non-Intrusive" approaches.

O'Banion (1994) studied non-intrusive advisement. Intrusive advisement was studied by Earl (1988) who characterized the practice as proactive efforts on the part of the professional and their interaction with students. Jeschke, Johnson, and Williams (as cited in Cruise, 2006) found that the combination of developmental advising techniques and contact initiated by advisors made intrusive advising different from prescriptive advising. Mottarella, Fritzsche and Cerabino (2004) conducted a study to examine characteristics students wanted in advisors. In 2000, Frost chronicled the history of academic advising in three categories in defining the most influential moments that contributed to the development of academic advising. Tuttle (2000) suggested that in order to understand the role of academic advisors, one must first understand their importance to both students and the institution they serve. Creamer (2000) also studied the techniques of academic advising in higher education. Smith (2002) observed the differences in perspectives of advisors and advisees and clearly defined and articulated the purpose of academic advising early in the advisor-student relationship.

#### The Gateway Program

The Gateway Program was established in 1990 as an alternative admission program for incoming freshmen who do not meet Eastern Illinois University's standard admission requirements (Eastern Illinois University, 2002). The program is not open to transfer or non-traditional students. It is specifically designed to provide access to traditional aged, academically disadvantaged students.

### Gateway Program Advisors

Academic advisors in the Gateway Program are specially trained to work with students at risk of experiencing academic difficulty in the completion of a degree. Gateway Program advisors all have master's degrees and follow strict guidelines that aid in student success (Appendix F).

### Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the present study was to assess the effectiveness of intrusive advisement approaches used by Gateway Program staff at Eastern Illinois University in comparison to non-intrusive advisement utilized by faculty advisors in academic departments. All students who attend Eastern Illinois University are required to see an advisor every semester, regardless whether it was a Gateway Program advisor, faculty advisor or a generalist academic advisor within the University's Academic Advising Center. To date, there had not been a study conducted to analyze the relationship between faculty advisement and provisional program advisement at Eastern Illinois University. A secondary purpose of the present study was to evaluate students' perceptions regarding their interpersonal relationships with Gateway and faculty advisors.

### Statement of the Problem

Throughout their college career, students seek help from a range of faculty advisors, as well as professional advisors, for help with course registration and assistance with personal issues. For the purposes of the current study, the relationship between faculty advisement and provisional program advisement and student satisfaction/success were a major concern. It was the hope of the researcher that the information gathered would serve as a source of information for Eastern Illinois University's faculty advisors in order to assess the effectiveness of their advising techniques in enhancing the well-being and success (i.e., degree attainment) of their students.

### Sample Population

The sample population for the present study consisted of former Gateway students admitted during the fall 2002 semester. At the time of the study, these students had declared majors and met with a faculty advisor within their academic degree program. Participants were in good standing academically, having earned more than 90 semester hours that fulfilled degree requirements, giving them senior class status. However, these 90 credit hours must have counted toward meeting specific graduation requirements.

This sample population was not a representative sample of the students within the Gateway Program. For example, the current research project does not include all ethnic groups represented in the Gateway Program. However, the sample population did consist of 12 students of African descent, which included 3 males and 9 females. Chronologically, the participants were eight 21-year olds, three 22-year olds, and one 23-year old. Students were enrolled in the following degree programs: (2) African American Studies, (1) Sociology, (1) Biology, (1) Health Studies, (3) Communications Studies and (4) Family and Consumer Sciences.

### Site Description

Eastern Illinois University is located in Charleston, Illinois. The majority of Eastern's 12,129 students come from the state of Illinois and the Midwest, with nearly 40 percent deriving from the Chicago metropolitan area (<http://www.eiu.edu/~admissns/com.php>). The majority of EIU students live in on-campus residence halls, but by the time they are juniors, many have abandoned campus housing for apartments and homes in the Charleston community. The University is known for its amazing landscape, farmland scenery and Gothic design buildings. The University campus is often described as very warm and friendly. A historically and predominantly White institution, the minority student population (11.5 %) is of sufficient size to warrant the existence of several recognized minority student organizations, such as the, Black Student Union, Black Graduate Student Association, Latin American Student Organization, Minority Teacher Education Association, Chinese Student Association, and Muslim Association.

In addition, the University established an Office of Minority Affairs in 1990 which has as its mission providing encouragement and support to students of color (Eastern Illinois University, 2002).

### Methodology

Qualitative, naturalistic inquiry provided the theoretical and methodological basis for the present inquiry. Naturalistic inquiry permits the study of a group in its natural setting. For the purpose of the current study, the researcher's intent was not to change the minds or remove the participants from their natural settings, but to examine the effectiveness of their experiences and interactions with their academic advisors (Gateway and Faculty). The researcher served as the primary instrument for data collection. The researcher collected data by conducting in-depth interviews with each student individually and posing a series of questions (Appendix E) about experiences with both Gateway Program advisement and faculty advisement in hope of identifying a distinction in the student perceptions between Intrusive and Non-Intrusive advisement approaches, a combination of interview questions were presented.

### Research Questions

The present study was an attempt to determine whether there were significant differences in student perceptions of academic advisement approaches used during faculty and Gateway advisement sessions. The following research questions guided the present study:

1. What characteristics are displayed in the students' advisement sessions with their Gateway and faculty advisors that will distinguish their level of knowledge of the University and degree requirements?
2. Upon exiting the Gateway Program, how knowledgeable was the student about activities on campus and opportunities available within their field of study?



3. Is there a perceived qualitative difference in the student/advisor relationship?  
(Faculty/student - Gateway Advisor/student)? How does this relationship impact students' attitudes regarding continuing to pursue a degree at Eastern Illinois University?
4. Should faculty advisors utilize the same advising techniques as Gateway Program advisors in order to provide students with a sense of acceptance in their degree program and the university community?
5. What are the students' perceptions of intrusive and non-intrusive advising?

#### Limitations

Several limitations applied to the present study. First, it was possible that students may have changed their academic degree programs more than once after leaving the Gateway Program. Second, it was also possible that students who were in the Gateway Program may have not met with their faculty advisor until their senior year due to clerical errors regarding their reclassification as undeclared majors. Third, due to the decision of solicited participants who did not participate in the study, a lack of representation from all ethnic groups exists. Finally, personal acquaintance or past (pre-research) social contacts between the researcher and participants may have been a factor in the responses of participants.

#### Definition of Terms

- Academic Advisement – the process of developing educational plans which clarify career and life goals via the development of a clear understanding of appropriate courses, as well as a proper interpretation of institutional requirements for successful degree completion (Grites, as cited in Frost, 2000).
- Advisor – a professional who serves as a resource to the students with guidance toward a successful academic career, providing knowledge of institutional rules, procedures, and policies (Byrd, 1995).

- Faculty Advisor – a professor or administrative staff member who is skilled in providing academic advisement to individual students or student organizations (Waters, 2002).
- Gateway Program a selective, highly structured program designed for students with an inability to meet regular Eastern Illinois University admission requirements. Participants are to participate in year-long intrusive advisement, mentoring, and tutoring programs.
- Intrusive advisement (or Developmental) – an advising approach that includes counseling, teaching, academic and social well-being and constant motivation (Earl, 1988).
- Non-Intrusive (or Prescriptive) – an advisement approach that focuses on the academic coursework of the student (Haschke, Johnson & Williams, 2001).

#### Overview of the Study

Chapter I contains the introduction, purpose and problem statements, a brief literature review and general overview of the present study. Chapter II includes the review of literature detailing the history of academic advising and its current status. Chapter III entails the research methodology and a detailed account of how the study was conducted. Chapter IV consists of the findings, along with a summary of the qualitative information gathered from the participants. Chapter V is comprised of an analysis of the findings, conclusions drawn, and recommendations for future researchers and academic advisor practitioners.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### History of Academic Advisement

The history of academic advising cannot be fully understood without a full examination of the history of American higher education. Frost (2000) chronicled the history of academic advising in three categories: (1) higher education before academic advising was defined, (2) academic advising as a defined and unexamined activity, and (3) academic advising as a defined and examined activity. The intent of the three categories was to focus and define the most influential moments that contributed to the development of academic advising.

In the late 1600s before academic advising was defined, faculty within institutions of higher learning controlled both teaching methods and the curriculum. According to Frost (2000), "students and faculty lived in the college, and strict rules governed all aspects of the students' lives" (p. 5). Students also had to follow the standards of the religious affiliation within the institution because a vast number of institutions were formed by religious denominations. By the late 1700s, students began to form their own opinions about education, and in many cases disregarded the rules and regulations of their universities. By 1775, students in the colonial colleges began to take more individual approaches toward what types of education and careers they wanted to pursue. Frost (2000) suggested that, "religious influences diminished as students demanded a curriculum that would advance their more personal goals" (p.5). In addition, these institutions were faced with such issues as the separation between church and state as well as laws and teachings governing the delivery of higher education.

In the year 1847, Oberlin College in Ohio made history by graduating the first female student with a bachelor's degree (Cohen, 1998). This event secured for women opportunities to pursue advanced degrees in education. In 1862, the Morrill Land Grant Act was passed by Congress in support of donating public land to higher education institutions with a primary focus on the Agriculture and Mechanical Arts. Twenty-eight years later, the Second Morrill Land Grant

Act (1890) provided funding to land grant institutions (specifically, public historically black colleges, tribal colleges and women's institutions).

By the early 1900s, academic advising slowly began to surface. The size of institutions began to increase and so did their numbers. Grites (as cited in Frost, 2002) stated, "one early attempt to connect students and faculty more closely took the form of a system of academic advising, introduced at Johns Hopkins in 1889" (p. 8). The process of having faculty members assist students with course selection was soon implemented. Later, universities such as Wesleyan, Alfred, Syracuse, and Columbia took the same approach in order to facilitate faculty/student relationships. In 1979, the National Academic Advising Association was formed to provide additional support and research to assist the advising profession. By the 1980s, the overall population of students who attended college had increased substantially, as well as the number of minority students. The number of community colleges also increased during this time period. Due to the increase in students and the need for more faculty members contributing to research, academic advisement served as a core element in an institutions' ability to develop meaningful relationships with students.

Although it is important to understand the history of advisement in higher education, it is also imperative to examine the theories that drive its practice. According to Yudof (2003), "To do the job well, advisors are required to have a broad understanding that crosses the boundaries of educational theory, psychology, sociology, cultural studies and other disciplines" (p. 7). Effective advising required that academic advisors have knowledge of theories such as retention theory, learning theory, student development theory, multicultural theory, personality theory, sociological theory, organizational theory, moral development theory, adult development theory, organizational theory and decision making theory (Creamer, 2002). According to Creamer (2000), "given the scope of the academic advising phenomenon, advisors may be required to understand many theories - not only one or two - in order to grasp sufficient knowledge to be useful in advising students" (p. 18).

Currently, one-on-one academic advising plays an essential role in student's ability to successfully pursue their desired degree. According to Nutt (2000),

Often the one-to-one relationship between the student and advisor is the only opportunity a student has to build a personal link with the institution; it, is thereby had a profound effect on the student's academic career and on the student's satisfaction with the institution (p. 220).

The use of academic advising has increased over the course of its existence as well as changed based on the student populations that continue to change every academic cycle. Colleges and universities utilize various methods in academic advising centers that primarily focus on providing students with guidance regarding degree requirements and course selection options. University faculty members also serve as advisors to students who are pursuing a degree in their academic disciplines. Smith (2002) confirms the importance of faculty demonstrating genuine interest in students, "Advisors, whether members of the teaching faculty or professional staff, can foster a positive connection with their students by demonstrating themselves as knowledgeable student advocates" (p.39). Advisors are also needed to facilitate student involvement in service and social organizations. According to Kramer, Tanner and Peterson (1995), "regular faculty-student interaction increases students' academic success, satisfaction and retention" (p. 64).

In order to understand the role of academic advisors, Tuttle (2000) suggest that one must first understand their importance to both students and the institution in which they serve. Upon entering college, one of the first people a student often encounters is his or her academic advisor, one of the many professionals who help students decide whether to pursue a specific career field. Of utmost importance is that "academic advisors should be well-versed in helping students clarify their paths to career and professional positions through appropriate educational planning" (Tuttle, p. 21).

### The Role of Academic Advisors

The role of an academic advisor, however, can be very broad. When the tasks, purposes, and techniques of academic advising are clearly spelled out for advisors, they are better able to pass on valuable information to students. According to Byrd (1995), "an advisor is one who guides, imparts knowledge, leads, and ultimately helps others become self-sufficient and independent. An advisor can introduce one to new experiences and help one become acclimated to new situations" (p. 45). This clarity also makes it possible for students to develop positive attitudes about the institution and its employees. The need to study the techniques of academic advising in higher education is essential. O'Banion (1994) states, "The process of academic advising includes the following dimension (1) exploration of the life goals, (2) exploration of vocational goals, (3) program choice, (4) course choices, and scheduling courses" (p.10). To be as effective as possible, academic advisors need to be properly updated on information that can help students succeed in their academic careers. Ineffective academic advising can be detrimental to the well-being of students and may steer them in the wrong direction. Ineffective advising also damages the institution's reputation and enrollment because when students seek help from a professional in the field who does not have the skills to properly assist them, they may look to other institutions that can serve them better.

According to Smith, (2000), advisors can bridge the differences in perspectives of advisor and advisee by clearly defining and articulating the purpose of academic advising early in the advisor-student relationship. Mottarella, Fritzsche and Cerabino (2004) conducted a study to examine characteristics students wanted in advisors. The study included responses from 468 students and measured the perceptions of students regarding their relationships with their advisors based on the advisors' gender, advising type, and the nature of the relationships they formed. The measurement tool used in the study included demographic information, such as each participant's age, gender, ethnic background, class standing, residency, etc. The NEO Five Factor Inventory which is used to measure personality traits, and the Academic Advising Inventory, which is used

to measure three aspects of the academic advising experience were both used in the study. The researchers found no differences in the advising relationship based on the advisor's gender. The study showed that women, unlike men, were more likely to prefer a friendlier and warm advising relationship. According to the authors, "Notably important to all participants is the depth of the advising relationship. Participants also value the type of advisor and the emotional nature of the advising relationship" (p. 57). Thus, a student's relationship with their academic advisor significantly influences their impression of the faculty and staff at the University they attend. If academic advisors possess the proper skills, their advising techniques can help determine whether students would want to return to their institution in the future. Subsequently, academic advisors are also influential in maintaining an institution's retention rates. As previously stated, an institution's retention rate is directly related to the quality of the relationships that develop between students and their academic advisors. Habley (as cited in Creamer and Creamer, 1994) posited that, "academic advising can be connected to institutional effectiveness" (p.17). The establishment of student/academic advisor relationships suggested that students who regularly consulted their academic advisors were more likely to be successful in obtaining the degree they originally sought than students who did not regularly communicate with their academic advisors. The academic advisors' responsibility is to make students feel comfortable, as well as show credibility when answering questions about academic and career goals.

Due to the close classroom interaction with students, faculty advisors should have a more positive effect on academics. Astin, Pascarella, Terenzini and Tinto (as cited in Kramer, Tanner and Peterson, 1995) stated, "The frequency and quality of faculty-student interaction significantly affect student satisfaction with the college experience. Regular faculty-student interaction increases students' academic success, satisfaction, and retention" (p. 64). Although faculty advisors play a huge role in the academic career of students, Fiddler and Alicea (as cited in Dillion and Fisher, 2000) expressed, "Many new faculty members do not receive sufficient training in advising" (p.16). Lynch (2004) conducted a study to compare professional advisement,

faculty advisors and academic department advisors. The study consisted of over 23,000 undergraduates and graduate students combined within a public, research mid-western land grant institution. The tool used in the research consisted of an on-line advising survey that students had to complete upon registering for their classes. The survey asked participants to provide a brief evaluation of their experience with academic advising during the semester. The survey asked for verification on whether they made contact with their advisors throughout the semester, as well as their reason(s) for not meeting with their advisors. If the student did meet with their advisor, whether it was a faculty, academic, or professional advisor, how accessible and knowledgeable were they during the advisement session. The researcher found that "Departmental and faculty advisors were rated significantly better on accessibility than were advisors in advising centers and equally high on willingness to take the time to address advisee concerns" (p.68).

#### Intrusive Advising

Intrusive advisement can be characterized as a proactive effort on the part of the professional, non-faculty member advisor. The goal of intrusive advisors is to assess each student's physical, mental and emotional well-being during advisement sessions with the hope of providing students with proper knowledge of University procedures and course requirements that provided the student with a sense of belonging and comfort. Intrusive advisement was also cited as an important component of student retention. According to Earl (1988), "intrusive advisement is a viable current option for student retention" (p.28). Jeschke, Johnson, and Williams (as cited in Cruise, 2006) found that the combination of developmental advising techniques and contact initiated by advisors made intrusive advising different from prescriptive advising. Intrusive advising, in many cases, was often considered developmental advising. Winston and Sandor (as cited in Mottarella, Fritzsche and Cerabino, 2004) described advising activities as "growth oriented." Through prolonged engagement, advisors explored the student's values and how they related to career choice: they also helped students with interpersonal problems or improving interpersonal skills.



### Non-Intrusive Advising

Non-Intrusive advisement, in many cases, was demonstrated by department advisors. This particular form of advisement consisted of discussions which focused on course selection, internship opportunities, career possibilities, meeting graduation requirements, and important academic deadlines. Heisserer and Parette (2002) define prescriptive advisement as "an authoritarian relationship in which the advisor makes a diagnosis, prescribes a treatment for the student and the student follows the prescriptive regimen" (p. 70). Non-Intrusive advisement sessions were not generally focused on the personal or social well-being of the student. Smith (2002) conducted a study to determine whether students preferred developmental advisement over prescriptive advisement. Two research questions guided the study: (1) Do first -year students prefer developmental advising to prescriptive advising? and (2) Do first year students report receiving more developmental than prescriptive advising? The sample population consisted of 34 undergraduate students who received academic advisement within the Advisement Services Center for Undergraduate Studies at the University at Albany. All participants in a focus group were first-year students. An audio recorded individual interview was conducted with each participant and later transcribed for review. The study found that students overwhelmingly preferred developmental advising over prescriptive advising.

Three years later, Weir, Dickman and Fuqua (2005) conducted a study to find out whether students preferred developmental versus prescriptive advising styles. The research sample consisted of 187 students within the College of Arts and Sciences at a southwestern institution in the United States. Parts 3 and 5 of the AAI (Academic Advising Inventory) preference of advising styles was administrated. The survey consisted of 28 items which focused on Developmental and Prescriptive advising. The tool also included a demographic questionnaire that asked participants for their major, advisor (whether faculty or staff) as well as how often they meet with their advisors and the length of time of each session. The researchers found that students preferred both developmental and prescriptive advising. However, advising technique

preferences depended on the activity in which the student was being advised, as well as the student's developmental level. Heisserer and Parette (2002) stated:

The increasing number of students who are at risk for academic failure, coupled with effective intervention approaches reported in the literature, suggest that academic advisors should strive to be more intrusive in their interaction with student advisees (p.73).

### Summary

The present review of literature regarding academic advising focuses on the history of academic advising, the role of academic advisors, and intrusive and non-intrusive advising approaches and the Gateway Program. Contained within the above description of the academic advisement phenomenon are the findings and conclusions expressed by noted researchers in the field of higher education administration. In addition, the present literature review shows how academic advising grew over time, as well as how academic advising has become a major asset within higher education institutions.

### CHAPTER III

#### METHODOLOGY

The present study was undertaken to determine whether there is a significant difference in the perception of students regarding their experience with the Gateway Program and faculty approaches to advisement.

##### Qualitative Design and Reasoning

One-on-one interviews were conducted to ascertain the perceptions of participants regarding their experiences with both the Gateway Program and faculty advisors. Specifically, naturalistic inquiry was the methodology of choice for the present study. Naturalistic inquiry involves the process of studying a group in its natural setting. The intent of the researcher was not to change the minds or remove the participants from their natural settings, but to examine the effectiveness of their experiences and interactions with their Gateway Program and faculty advisors. Creswell (2005) states, "qualitative research is a type of educational research in which the researcher relies on the views of participants, asks broad, general questions, collects data consisting largely of words (or text) from participants, describes and analyzes these words for themes, and conducts the inquiry in a subjective, biased manner" (p.39).

##### Research Methods

The research consisted of two interviews. During the first interview, the researcher met individually with former Gateway students who were admitted in the fall of 2002 with an anticipated graduation date of May 2006. The interviews were in-depth and audio-recorded and ranged from 35 minutes to an hour and a half. The follow-up interviews ranged from 25-45 minutes. A typed transcription was presented to the participants giving them the opportunity to clarify any information that was presented during the time of the initial interview.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the present study:

1. What characteristics are displayed in the students' advisement sessions with their Gateway and faculty advisors that will distinguish their level of knowledge of the University and degree requirements?
2. Upon exiting the Gateway Program, how knowledgeable was the student about activities on campus and resources available within their degree in their field of study?
3. Is there a perceived qualitative difference in the student/advisor relationship? (Faculty/student-Gateway Advisor/student)? How does it impact students' attitudes regarding continuing to pursue a degree at Eastern Illinois University?
4. Should faculty advisors utilize the same advising techniques as Gateway Program Advisors in order to provide the students with a sense of acceptance in their degree program and the University community?
5. What are the students' perceptions of intrusive and non-intrusive advising?

### The Gateway Program

Gateway Program academic advisors follow strict guidelines that aid in student success. The Gateway Program, an alternative admission program, was established in 1990 for students who do not meet Eastern Illinois University's general admissions standards (Appendix F). Gateway Program students are required to attend weekly meetings with their advisors who provide them with information that is imperative to completing the requirements of the University, as well as the Gateway Program itself. In addition, students are required to attend mandatory study tables and participate in study groups. It is also mandated that students attend weekly meetings with their advisor as well as workshops and classes designed to enhance their financial, social, academic, and cultural well-being. Due to the large amount of academically disadvantaged students, the Gateway Program provides additional academic assistance to its

students. Once admitted through the Gateway Program students along with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) are required to sign a participant agreement form which states that they understand and will abide by the rules of the program. The students are also required to sign an authorization to exchange or request information which allows Gateway Program advisors to exchange information with students' instructors/ professors as well as their legal parent(s) or guardian(s) (Appendix F). The Gateway Program consists of two consecutive semesters where the students are to maintain a GPA of a 2.0. If the students fail to meet the requirements, they are to remain in the Gateway Program for an additional semester or are released upon the discretion of the Gateway Program Director and the Director of Minority Affairs. During the first semester students are required to enroll in and successfully complete University Foundations EIU 1111. Those Gateway students who received a score of 12 and under on the Nelson Denny Reading Test or receive a 21 or lower on the Verbal section of their ACT are required to enroll in and complete General Studies 1000. During the second semester all students are required to take General Studies 1100.

#### Participants

The sample population for the present study were former Gateway students admitted during the fall 2002 semester. At the time of the study, these students have declared majors and meet with a faculty advisor within their academic degree program. Participants were in good standing academically. Participants must have earned more than 90 semester hours, giving them senior class status. This sample population is not a complete representation of all former Gateway Program advisees. The sample population consisted of 12 students of African descent (three males and nine females). No other racial or ethnic groups were represented in this study although the program serves students of all races and ethnicities. The sample population consisted of eight 21-year olds, three 22- year olds and one 23 year old. Represented majors were: (2) African

American Studies, (1) Sociology, (1) Biology, (1) Health Studies, (3) Communications Studies and (4) Family and Consumer Sciences. (Table 1).

Table 1

## Demographic Information for fall 2002 Gateway Participants

| Gender | Age | Major                        |
|--------|-----|------------------------------|
| Male   | 22  | Biology                      |
| Male   | 21  | Communications Studies       |
| Female | 21  | Family and Consumer Sciences |
| Female | 23  | Family and Consumer Sciences |
| Female | 21  | African American Studies     |
| Female | 21  | Family and Consumer Sciences |
| Female | 21  | Family and Consumer Sciences |
| Male   | 21  | African American Studies     |
| Female | 21  | Health Studies               |
| Female | 21  | Sociology                    |
| Female | 22  | Communications Studies       |
| Female | 22  | Communications Studies       |

Interview Protocol

The researcher met with each participant individually. At the time of the interview, each participant received a cover letter that described the purpose of the study and a statement of informed consent (Appendices B and C). After the participants read the information presented, they were invited to ask questions. Each participant signed the statement of informed consent before the interview began. Interviews were held in the Gateway Office and the conference rooms of the University Library. The interview protocol consisted of 23 questions which served as a guide during the interview. The researcher audio recorded the interview with each participant (Appendix E).

After the interviews were completed, transcriptions of participants' responses were made. A second, follow-up interview was conducted in order to give the participants an opportunity to clarify any statements that were made during the initial interview. The second, follow-up interviews were also conducted in the Gateway office and library conference rooms. Corrections and additional explanations were incorporated in the findings section of the research.

#### Treatment of Data

After the follow-up interview, the researcher transcribed each audio tape. Each interview transcription was coded according to response sets (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). The researcher analyzed each interview protocol linked to each research question. Interview protocol responses were then analyzed for related themes.



## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

The findings of the present study are similar to the findings in prior research, yet unique to the sampled population. A total of 12 participants were interviewed using a qualitative naturalistic method that permitted the identification of students' perceptions of intrusive and non-intrusive advisement, the techniques used in advisement sessions with their Gateway and faculty advisors, their student/advisor relationships, the students' knowledge of resources upon exit from the Gateway Program, and students' perceptions of their Gateway and faculty advisors' knowledge regarding University and degree program requirements. The transcriptions of the interviews were analyzed and related themes were identified. Each student had distinctive, yet, in many cases, very similar experiences regarding advisement from their Gateway and faculty advisors.

The findings are presented under the following themes: level of knowledge of University and degree requirements among Gateway and faculty advisors; the knowledge of students regarding resources on campus; differences in Gateway/student relationships and faculty/student relationships; students' perceptions of intrusive and non-intrusive advising; and, recommended advising techniques.

Interview question one asked students to describe their perceptions of the knowledge their academic advisors possessed regarding University general requirements and degree specific course requirements. Participant responses to this question are contained within the following narrative.

#### Perceptions of Gateway and Faculty Advisors Knowledge of University and Degree Requirements

Several students described advisement sessions in which both Gateway and faculty advisors demonstrated a lack of knowledge regarding University deadlines and degree requirements. For example, there were several instances in which students described a perceived

lack of advisement knowledge among their particular Gateway advisors, causing one student to seek information regarding deadlines and other course-related information from another Gateway advisor. This student described her experiences as frustrating and detrimental:

The first semester I felt like my Gateway advisor was not helpful to me. There were some classes that I think she should not have put me in because she knew my ACT score. And, she probably knew that the class she put me in was not going to be a good resource. Also, she did not tell me about add and drop. So, I didn't know that either and that affected my GPA my first and second years of college.

Another participant felt that her advisor lacked the knowledge of how large a course load a student with marginal skills may be capable of successfully completing when she stated,

My freshman year Gateway advisor, I honestly don't feel she helped me much. As a freshman, my first fall semester I had eighteen credit hours and she didn't advise me to drop any classes. So, I honestly don't think she benefited [helped] me.

Another student stated,

My faculty advisor put me on a plan each semester which I got done with.

Whereas, my Gateway advisor put me in classes which I think I didn't have to take. This made me have to go to summer school to get back on the right track and graduate on time.

Students also described situations in which they felt their advisor misinformed them regarding required versus elective course completion. "My first semester, I was put in a math class that my [Gateway] advisor told me was required and later I found out that I didn't even need it."

Faculty advisors' received similar responses, related to the lack of general University knowledge and advisement information. When asked whether they felt their faculty advisor provided them with enough information regarding their program of study, one participant described her decision to seek advice elsewhere by stating, "No, I had to go to another teacher. It

was actually my teacher I took for Zoology, and she helped me a lot more with my classes than my faculty advisor." Another participant stated,

Um, no, I think that I came across FCS and then when I got into the program she just helped me select my classes. She never really sat down and spoke to me about FCS and the different things that FCS had to offer. I found out that information with TRIO and Gateway helping me, assisting me in the major.

Participants similarly experienced faculty advisors who failed to provide additional explanation on course requirements or general information about the University. For example, one student stated,

I don't think that he [faculty advisor] could help me a lot, but he did give me the classes that I needed to take. He didn't give me a lot of advice. I felt my other advisor, Gateway advisor, helped me more now than my faculty advisor did. I asked him something, and he's like, "You need to do this and do that with" no explanation.

Another participant's experience with her advisor was similar:

No. Like the first time I seen my advisor, I went to him [and after I left] I was like 'I can't believe he a teacher. Like he's just like retarded.' I hate to say that, but he was like no help at all and then he told me to go see not the head of the department but the head advisor. Of all the advisors, he told me to go see him. I'm like 'you're suppose to be my advisor.' So, I ain't seen that man since and that was like two years ago.

Seven of the twelve participants stated that their Gateway and faculty advisors failed to provide them with sufficient information regarding course deadlines, class schedules, and add and drop dates. A common theme found in the study was that faculty advisors, as well as Gateway advisors, failed to inform students' of events that were occurring outside of their department. However, students were informed of events and workshops within their academic department. In contrast, former Gateway advisors continued to provide knowledge of events and workshops on and off campus. In many cases, the students only visited their faculty advisor to request

permission to register for classes while at the same time seeking help from their former Gateway Advisor for advisement regarding the proper classes to take. There were, however, some positive responses indicating that these former Gateway participants felt that their Gateway and faculty advisors provided them with information that was very beneficial to their academic careers. One participant described his experience by stating,

I would say what I felt really helped was my Gateway advisor. She was new at the time but she was really helpful. I remember I had a problem with a class, I think it was my freshman chemistry class, and she went out and found me like three tutors for that one class. So I thought that was really nice. I got a lot of help more through the Gateway program than I did with my own major department.

Another participant described her interactions with her faculty advisor as very helpful:

She just gave me the classes that were required and then she just told me to take the classes I was interested in, but she did tell me that I should take one required class, administrative child care. So, I did take that one class but for the most part, she just gave me a list of classes that I needed to take and told me what classes I had to take before I take another set of classes.

The responses above illustrate instances where participants held both a positive and negative perception of their Gateway and faculty advisement approaches.

#### Student Perceptions of Intrusive and Non-Intrusive Advisement

Research question two asked students to express their knowledge of Intrusive advisement. Participants' reactions to this question are contained within the following narrative.

Of the twelve participants in the study, none could provide an actual definition of intrusive advisement. However, activities that took place during Gateway advisement sessions were described that demonstrated intrusive characteristics. With regard to faculty advisement, participants described activities such as their advisor providing them information on classes they needed to take for graduation. However, personal issues or campus involvement issues were not

addressed. When presented with whether they understood the concept of intrusive advisement, one student's response was typical of all, "No, is that someone that's like basically in your business, academic business?" Another student, responded to the question by stating, "I did [understand the concept of intrusive advisement] when I had the meeting over the summer. When Johnnetta Jones [the late Director of the Office of Minority Affairs] got on our butts and told us we needed to do this, this and this and listen, and I was like 'okay'." Other participants expressed that they had never heard of the term or responded by saying "no". This particular question seemed to alarm each participant. Each seemed to be under the impression that "intrusive" was a term that they were supposed to have proper knowledge of and failed to receive throughout the course of their academic career.

#### Knowledge of Students Regarding Resources on Campus

Research question three asked participants to explain where they obtained information on resources available on campus as well as who contributed to their knowledge base. A detailed description of participants' responses follows.

Knowledge obtained, such as course and graduation requirements, came from a variety of resources available to the students while in the Gateway Program, as well as provided by their faculty advisor. Courses such as University Foundations, General Studies 1000, and General Studies 1100 contributed to the participant's awareness and knowledge of resources on campus. A common theme was that University programs such as library tours, Open House, required class assignments and peers contributed to the knowledge of resources on campus. One participant mentioned, "I became well aware of the Writing Center my freshman year here through just the general education classes within my department." Another participant, grateful for assistance, described the significance of tours and workshops:

When I got to Eastern, we did library tours. Everybody knows how to use a computer.

But, regarding the second, third, fourth and ground floors, we had to go look for books

and use the Booth II-net system. They taught us how to do that. TRIO, I found out just by coming over here seeing my Gateway advisor.

However, two out of twelve participants stated that they became aware of resources available to them on their own by utilizing the EIU website or flyers that were placed around campus. One student mentioned that she became knowledgeable regarding resources on campus by finding things for herself, without the help from either her Gateway or faculty advisor.

#### Differences in Gateway/Student Relationships and Faculty/Student Relationships

Research question four asked participants to describe the differences, if any, in their relationships with Gateway Program advisors and faculty advisors. Participants' responses to this question were full of passion, regret, anger and appreciation and are stated below.

The participants' opinions of their relationships with both their Gateway and faculty advisors varied. Participants expected their advisor to assist them in any struggles that they were having in any classes, as well as be able to communicate with their advisor about any concerns or questions related to school or personal issues. Three of the twelve participants stated that they did not form a relationship with their faculty advisors. Each of the three shared a common theme, perceived lack of an academic and personal rapport between the student and the faculty advisor. One participant felt that his faculty advisor lacked interpersonal skills and neglected his personal well-being as a student,

I feel like I formed a relationship with my Gateway advisor more than my faculty advisor. Every time I needed a letter of recommendation, needed someone to talk to, or general advice, I could still go to her [Gateway advisor] and talk to her.

In many cases, the participants just wanted their advisors to relate to them as far as understanding their needs as human beings. One participant felt that his faculty advisor was racist and in several ways tried to discourage him from pursuing a degree within his academic program. This particular participant described his advisor as follows:

He was racist, very racist, and extremely racist! I've known a few black people that he advised and he did them the same way. He was sexist. He is a jerk and they need to really get rid of him. He was not helpful at all. I know there are other advisors on this campus that are probably better than him. He's just horrible and I would not recommend him. I would tell anybody, "if you going in to the [name] department, and if your major is pre-med, whatever you do, ask to see someone else 'cause he is not the person who would help you.

When asked to describe the differences, if any, in advisement sessions with faculty advisors and Gateway advisors, one student responded by stating,

She [Gateway advisor] was nicer and compassionate. She was actually interested in what I was saying. She gave me feedback and she helped when I had questions. My faculty advisor was more like, "this is my way and this is what you need to do. I don't really want to hear what you have to say. This is how it goes." My Gateway advisor was much better than my faculty advisor.

One common theme found in the student/faculty advisor relationships was the lack of time spent with department advisors in order to form a bond with the students. One student described the differences thusly,

I'll probably characterize Gateway as being better because you meet one-on-one, with no interrupts. In my case, this was with my GA. As to having like a department advisor, it sometimes gets busy and she may not have time for me. My Gateway advisor was always there.

In contrast, another participant stated, "The faculty advisor can probably relate more. My Gateway advisor was a GA. My faculty advisor got both her master's and B.A. from here, so she kind of related more on a personal level with me." A small number of participants felt that a close relationship was established because their Gateway Advisor cared more about their grades and

success at Eastern. A typical response was, "She [Gateway Advisor] really cared about me. She wanted to see me graduate. It was like if I pass a class she passes it too."

Typically, faculty advisors assist over 300 students, which makes it more difficult to have extended advisement sessions on a daily basis. Another theme was that participants seemed unconcerned about other duties that the faculty advisor had to fulfill such as engaging in research and presenting class lectures. The participants felt it was their faculty advisor's obligation to meet their needs upon request with the expectation that their faculty advisor would be reliable enough to help them. One participant stated,

I know it's a lot of people they have to deal with, but so does Gateway. A lot of people come through the Gateway Program and there are not as many advisors as there are in department advisement but they need to just motivate you and stay on top of things and tell me what I need to have and what I need to get. I should not have relied solely on degree audits and other stuff to find out what I have taken and what I need to take.

In contrast to the students' statement Eastern Illinois University, 2002 Undergraduate Catalog states:

It is the responsibility of the students to know and to observe the requirements of his /her curriculum and the rule governing academic work. Although the advisor will attempt to help the students make a wise decisions, the ultimate responsibility for meeting the requirements for graduation rests with the students.(EIU 2002, 45).

In general, several participants expected that their faculty advisor would guide them through their classes as well as make sure they were on the right track for graduation. With regards to a student/advisor relationship, one participant stated, "She [faculty advisor] has so many students, so it's not like she really had time to get personal with you as an individual." Each instance represented an experience in which the participant felt he/she did not receive adequate advisement or did not have the opportunity to develop a relationship with their faculty advisor.



### Recommended Advising Techniques

Research question five required participants to indicate what they would like to see changed regarding the advisement process within their academic department. Participants' remarks are summarized below.

Throughout the research, one theme that continued to surface was the change in advisement experiences when participants transitioned from the Gateway Program to their academic department. A general consensus was that all participants seemed to express hopes of faculty advisors being more sympathetic, as well as interested in their life outside of being a student. When presented with the question, if you could change one thing about your faculty advisors, what would it be?, participants felt that they would change the amount of time they were allotted to spend with their advisor during an advisement session as well as decrease the number of students that their advisor advised on a regular basis. One student mentioned that her experience with her faculty advisor was satisfactory; however, she would recommend the program hire an assistant so that her advisor would see fewer students and the advising process would be more interpersonal. She stated, "I would say that they could have somebody helping her with the advising because she's by herself and she's advising may be more than 500 students." In contrast, another participant stated,

I would have to say, I want him [department advisor] to be more interested in what I have to say regarding different classes that I thought were not right for me at that time, instead of just pushing things on me and saying that just how it has to be.

The issue of students feeling affection from their advisors seemed to be particularly important to students in the present study. Students used several terms when describing their advisors. Terms such as "caring," "supportive" and "understanding" remained constant throughout the interviews. One student confirmed the support he received from his advisor, but also concern for his attitude. "I think he needs to be more sympathetic and not rush into things

and maybe tell people what classes they need. I know he wants people to go out and work hard, but that's him."

Few recommendations were suggested when it came to changes in the Gateway Program. The participants felt that Gateway advisors really cared about their well-being and supported them while they were participants in the Gateway Program and long after they had been released from the program. One participant, however stated, "I think that they expected more from you as a Gateway student, but once you were released from the program, you were on your own." One student suggested that she would place students within categories by major in order for the Gateway Program to properly advise students at the same time.

I would probably put students together with the GA or advisor based on their academic interests or needs, shall I say, because the person that I had really could not relate to my academic studies choice. So, if I could change one thing, it would be just that, mostly relating issues.

One participant expressed great appreciation towards the Gateway Program.

I think that all freshmen should go through the program. Not necessarily the Gateway Program, but an environment such as the one found in the Gateway program. A lot of people that I hang with and know came through the Gateway Program and they are all doing well. All have good GPAs and are involved on campus. It really sets you up to do better. Over the summer, you know, when you come to get registered right before you come here, you go to see any academic advisor. Like this lady set me up with all these bogus classes, but when I came [in the fall] my whole schedules switched 'cause there were some things I needed to take or should have been taking. So, I think all freshmen should be in an environment that the Gateway Program provides.

### Related themes

Throughout the course of the interviews, additional themes continued to surface that were not directly related to the research questions. Those themes, however, explained the motivational levels of the students to successfully complete college. It seemed that students primarily elected to attend EIU due to its low cost and relatively small size. However, four of the twelve participants stated that EIU was not their first choice for attendance. One participant mentioned she never wanted to attend college. It was pressure from her family members who felt that she should attend that caused her to do so.

Of the twelve students admitted to the University via the Gateway Program, none were aware that they were admitted through an alternative admission program. After the participants were released from the Gateway Program, all but two of the twelve expected their faculty advisor to utilize the same advisement techniques. Upon being released from the Gateway Program, students expressed that they did not feel inferior to regular admitted students. However, mild feelings of insecurities seemed present during the interviews of two participants. One participant described his experience of adjusting to the need to be self-motivating after being released from the program by stating, "I would say academically I was ready to compete, but at the same time, not having those study table hours mandatory kind of not put on the pressure, but in a way put on pressure to study on my own." Another participant describes his experience by saying,

I felt confident at first, but after I was released and in more of the more faster pace classes, I did get discouraged. At first, I didn't understand what it was that I was doing wrong; that I wasn't getting the same type of grades the other students were getting. Now, I'm looking back and I'm seeing now that I am almost at the end and those same people who were like highly motivated are like slacking. And, I'm like really understanding and even more determined that I don't find myself as frustrated like I did two years ago.

### Summary

Chapter IV outlined the findings of the research according to views, perceptions and opinions of students' advisement sessions with their Gateway and faculty advisors. A variety of themes were found regarding students' experiences with their Gateway and faculty advisors. The findings suggested that although students preferred Gateway advisement due to the supportive and nurturing methods, they still found flaws with Gateway advisors such as, the lack of knowledge of University academic processes and procedures. Faculty advisors in many cases provided students with important knowledge of academic concerns, usually associated with their role as a professor. The establishment of relationships with Gateway and faculty advisors served as motivation for students to connect successfully to their academic program. The concepts of intrusive and non-intrusive advisement approaches were unknown to students. Related themes that were not entirely related to the study were identified.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to assess students' perceptions of non-intrusive faculty advisement at Eastern Illinois University in comparison to intrusive advisement utilized in the Gateway Program. A secondary purpose of the present study was to evaluate the perceptions of students regarding their academic advisement process and their student/advisor relationship. Below is my analysis of the findings from the participants in response to the research questions.

#### DISCUSSION

Research Question #1: What characteristics are displayed in the students' advisement sessions with their Gateway and Faculty advisors that will distinguish their level of knowledge of the University and degree requirements?

Several studies have investigated advisors' knowledge on related theories and techniques to assist students throughout their academic careers. However, it was rare that those studies expressed the specifics of alternative admission programs or faculty advisors' knowledge of University and degree requirements. The amount of knowledge provided to the students by their Gateway advisor varied tremendously in comparison to the knowledge level attributed to the faculty advisors. Since the Gateway Program serves as a stepping stone as well as entry to the campus community, Gateway advisors in many cases may have felt obligated to inform students of the different events that occurred on campus. Since advisors were not included in the present study, it is not possible to draw any conclusions regarding their perceptions on these issues addressed herein.

Gateway advisors assigned students to their initial classes (usually General Education courses) and, in some cases, continued to do so throughout the students' affiliation with the University. Gateway advisors introduced students to various majors in order to assist them in seeking a degree that best fit their interests. In contrast, faculty advisors were more prone to inform students of events that occur within their own department. Unfortunately, in many cases,

due to the lack of time spent during the advisement session, faculty advisors failed to mention events that occurred on campus to the students, in general. However, since the students have already declared their majors prior to meeting with their department faculty advisors, they were able to focus on course requirements for their desired major. The amount of information provided to the students from their Gateway advisor was a true indicator that students perceived Gateway Program advisors as more knowledgeable than their faculty advisor. However, it is not to say that faculty advisors lack general knowledge but it could be a possibility that they are not focusing their advisement session on co-curriculum activities but on course requirements for graduation.

Although Gateway advisors provided information to students regarding campus activities, the validity regarding whether the participants received correct information was not mentioned. In general the nature of the program was designed to assist academically disadvantaged students in successfully completing academic coursework and to provide them with proper skills in order to meet graduation requirements.

Research Question #2: Upon exiting the Gateway Program, how knowledgeable was the student about activities on campus and resources available within his/her degree in their field of study?

The research contains detailed information regarding how knowledgeable students were about activities on campus and resources available with their degree field after being released from the Gateway Program. The present research shows that outside sources other than the Gateway Program and faculty advisors provided them with accessible information on resources available to them on campus. The protocol questions failed to acknowledge whether the students received certain information in order to actively take part in the resources that were made available to them. One cannot assume that the knowledge that former Gateway students received was all based on information that was provided to them while in the Gateway program or with their faculty advisor. Many outside factors contributed to the students' knowledge of activities and available resources, such as the Student Support Program (TRIO), activities presented by the Residence Hall Association, or information provided by instructors.

Research Question #3: Is there a perceived qualitative difference in the student/advisor relationship (Faculty/student-Gateway advisor/student)? How does it impact students' attitude regarding continuing to pursue a degree at Eastern Illinois University?

The findings from the present research demonstrated that there is a difference in the student/Gateway advisor and student/faculty advisor relationship. It was found that the majority of the students within the study formed a more personal relationship with their Gateway advisor than the relationship with their faculty advisor. The participants were able to communicate with their Gateway advisor on a more personal level in regards to their emotional and mental well-being whereas department advisors seemed to create a one-sided relationship in which information was presented to the student. The personality and level of interest shown by the advisor toward the students has a significant effect on the students' perceptions of the effectiveness of the advisement session. Although Lynch (2004) found that students prefer faculty advisors due to their accessibility, the present research discovered that faculty advisors were not accessible in regards to the needs of the student's personal, mental and emotional well-being. However, this difference did not seem to affect the students' willingness to pursue an undergraduate degree. The data suggested that once the students were accepted to EIU, they were destined to graduate, this maybe because the participants were in their last semester. All but two of the participants in the study had their assigned advisor as their professors at one time or another while seeking their desired degree.

Research Question #4: Should faculty advisors utilize the same advising techniques as Gateway Program advisors in order to provide the students with a sense of acceptance in their degree program and the University community?

According to the information provided by the participants, faculty advisors should take a more intrusive role similar to Gateway advisors. The advisement utilized within academic departments appeared to focus on the academic well-being of the student and not the whole person. Participants in the study upon entering EIU were committed to the idea of obtaining their

degree within their field of study. However, that is not to say that the students were not negatively affected by the treatment that they received from their faculty advisors. Many participants appeared discouraged during the interview due the type of advisement that they received, yet the advisement approach did affect degree attainment from EIU.

Research Question #5: What are the students' perceptions of intrusive and non-intrusive advising?

The research found that the participants viewed intrusive advisement as a very compassionate, sympathetic approach. And, in several ways, these students found intrusive advising to be a form of mentorship practiced by Gateway Program advisors. Although students did not have a clear understanding of the term "intrusive", they were able to give examples of its practice while describing their experiences with Gateway Program advisors. The students were also able to describe the prescriptive advisement they received from their faculty advisors. In relation to the study conducted by Smith (2002), students preferred developmental advising over prescriptive advising. However, during the students' first year in college, they reported experiencing almost exclusively prescriptive advising from their department advisors. Once the students were released from the Gateway program, they were more dependent than independent. It seemed that the participants were under the impression that their faculty advisor would take on the same roles as their Gateway advisor, not realizing that the Gateway Program assists fewer students on average than advisors within academic departments. The participants in the present study were more likely to have had a need to feel involved in order to take advantage of either Gateway or faculty support systems. The majority of the students in the present study were former members of preparatory programs in high school or current participants in programs such as TRIO which also provided support systems.



Recommendations for Gateway Program and Faculty Advisors

1. Both Faculty and Gateway advisors must educate themselves on the characteristics of the generation that they are advising in order to assist them in ways in which the student will understand. Serving as liaisons between students and departments and utilizing professional development opportunities such as NACADA and Eastern Illinois University's Campus Advising Network will increase their awareness of the ever changing advising profession.
2. The Gateway Program should hire Graduate Assistants who understand the concept of intrusive advising. Furthermore, G.A.'s with responsibility for academic advisement should be provided with significant training concerning degree, program, and University requirements. Training all advisors will provide each program with greater credibility.
3. Gateway and faculty advisors need to have a distinct approach as well as an understanding of the types of advising they want to use in advisement sessions. Students must receive an explanation of the types of advisement they will receive and expectations of their own participation and responsibilities in advisement processes. In turn, when students transition from the Gateway Program to their academic degree program, they will be better equipped to evaluate their advisement experiences, if they are to assess whether the goals set before them were accomplished.
4. Time constraints often hinder faculty advisors from establishing meaningful and trusting relationships with students. However, faculty advisors should incorporate Gateway advisors' advising techniques such as providing students with information on resources and events within their department and the larger University community. Faculty advisors should show compassion and interest in the mental, physical and emotional well-being of their advisees by communicating on topics other than course selection and future goals associated with academic degree programs.

5. Faculty advisors should act as mentors to their advisees in order to guide them toward achieving personal and academic goals by communicating and providing knowledge.

#### Recommendations for Future Researchers

1. Future researchers should include a complete representation from the Gateway Program student population in order to get a wider and accurate description of Gateway Program advisement and department advisement.
2. Future researchers should conduct a study using both Gateway and Non- Gateway participants in order to compare students' perception of advisement approaches utilized within their academic degree program.
3. Former Gateway students should be interviewed at the beginning of their junior year in order for the students to provide a vivid and fresh comparison and contrast of the student's experiences with both the Gateway Program and faculty advisors.
4. Future researchers should examine outside involvement by further investigating student participation in organizations as well as observe what leadership roles former Gateway students hold on campus.
5. Future researchers should provide a complete representation of all academic programs on campus in order to determine if there is a specific academic program that lacks proper advisement techniques.
6. Future researchers should provide a complete representation of Gateway students in the study in order to receive a proper representation of advisement experiences and perceptions.
7. Future researchers should examine whether students who have formed a relationship with their advisors have a higher GPA as well as complete their degree program in the recommended time allotted compared to students who have not formed a relationship with their advisor.

8. Future researchers should interview participants who are members of an alternative admission program at another institution that has similar qualifications and requirements such as the Gateway Program to prevent researcher bias dealing with past acquaintances among participants.

### CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the current research was to assess student perceptions of intrusive versus non-intrusive advisement practices at Eastern Illinois University. Specifically, attention was devoted to student understanding of the academic advisement process, perceptions of their relationships with academic advisors, and their perceptions of the knowledge base of their academic advisors. The present study contained an examination of the history of academic advisement and its growth in higher education, the developing role of academic advisors, and the differences between intrusive and non-intrusive advisement approaches.

The research showed that although students preferred Gateway advisement due to the supportive and nurturing method used, they still found flaws such as the lack of knowledge of University academic processes and procedures. A closer relationship is established within the Gateway Program due to the purpose of its design. Gateway participants are selected by the Director of Minority Affairs. In contrast, students are placed with their department faculty advisors on the bases of their major as well as concentration/option within their desired degree program. Faculty advisors in many cases provide students with proper knowledge due to their role as a professor within their academic department. The establishment of relationships among advisor and students served as a motivation to the students to successfully connect to their academic program and the University. The perception of intrusive and non-intrusive advisement approaches served as an action to the student with disregard to the actual definition of the term.

Weir, Dickman and Fuqua (2005) found that students preferred both developmental and prescriptive advising. However, preferred advising techniques depended on the activity on which the student was being advised as well as the student's developmental level. The same theory

applies to the former Gateway Program participants. Whereas the majority of the participants seemed to prefer Gateway Program advisement techniques, a few preferred the prescriptive advisement approach utilized by their department faculty advisors. The findings in the present study suggest that intrusive advising was more effective when it came to student satisfaction with the knowledge they received and the relationships that existed with their Gateway Program advisors. Although the participants did not fully understand the term, intrusive advisement was perceived as essential to the educational development of students who entered the University through an alternative admission program. Students admitted through the Gateway Program felt that they had a strong support system comprised of professionals who were dedicated to helping them succeed. Intrusive advisement served as a tool for building personal relationships between students and their advisors.

In turn I will leave you with a quote by Wes Habley that in my opinion represents the true role of how academic advisors serve as a major component in assisting students towards a flourishing college career, "Academic advisors mediate the dissonance between what students expect from the educational environment and what they experience in that environment."

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### Institutional Review Board Approval



January 31, 2006

Josephine Robinson

Counseling and Student Development

Thank you for submitting the research protocol titled "The Effects of Academic Advising in Higher Education: Is Intrusive Effective?" for review by the Eastern Illinois University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has Approved this research protocol following an Expedited Review procedure.

This protocol has been given the IRB number 06-003. You may proceed with this study from 1/30/2006 to 1/29/2007. You must submit Form E, Continuation Request, to the IRB by 12/18/2006 if you wish to continue the project beyond the approval expiration date.

This approval is valid only for the research activities, timeline, and subjects described in the above named protocol. IRB policy requires that any changes to this protocol be reported to, and approved by, the IRB before being implemented. You are also required to inform the IRB immediately of any problems encountered that could adversely affect the health or welfare of the subjects in this study. Please contact me or Cheryl Siddens, Compliance Coordinator, at 581-8576 in the event of an emergency. All correspondence should be sent to:

Institutional Review Board

c/o Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

Telephone: 581-8576

Fax: 217-581-7181

Email: [eiuirb@www.eiu.edu](mailto:eiuirb@www.eiu.edu)

Upon completion of your research project, please submit Form G, Completion of Research Activities, to the IRB, c/o the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. Thank you for your assistance, and the best of success with your research.

John Best, Chairperson

Institutional Review Board

Telephone: 581-6412

Email: [jbbest@eiu.edu](mailto:jbbest@eiu.edu)

## APPENDIX B

### Consent to Participant in Research

## CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

### Student Perceptions of Intrusive and Non- Intrusive Advising Approaches

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Josephine Robinson, from the Counseling and Student Development Program at Eastern Illinois University. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You have been asked to participate in this study because you are a former Gateway student who was admitted in the fall of 2002 with an anticipated graduation date of May 2006. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand before deciding to participate. If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to:

Participate in an in-depth interview with the researcher and answer a series of questions about your experiences with both the Gateway Program advisement and your academic Department advisement. Data will be collected by audio recording.

There are no reasonable foreseeable risks or discomforts, including physical inconveniences and their likelihood, that will develop based on the significance of this study. Participant in the study will receive no benefits; however, information gathered will serve as a source of information for Eastern Illinois University's Academic Department advisors and Gateway Program advisors in order to determine the effectiveness of their advising techniques in enhancing the well-being and successfulness (i.e., degree attainment) of their students.

Any information obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of the principal investigator. In reported data, participants will not be identified by names. The recorded data will be stored in a locked desk to which no one will have access other than the Principal Investigator. Information from the participants who formally withdraw from the study will remain confidential. All documentation and recorded interviews will be destroyed one year after the completion of the research project.

Participation in this research study is voluntary and not a requirement or a condition for being the recipient of benefits or services for Eastern Illinois University or any other organization sponsoring the research project. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits or services to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer. There is no penalty if you withdraw from the study and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

If you have any questions or concerns about his research, please contact the principle investigator, Josephine Robinson or the faculty sponsor, Dr. James Wallace, at the following addresses:

Josephine Robinson  
Gateway Office  
9<sup>th</sup> Street Hall  
Charleston IL 61920  
[jrobinson@eiu.edu](mailto:jrobinson@eiu.edu)  
(217) 581-7850

Dr. James Wallace  
2112 Buzzard Hall  
Charleston IL 61920  
[cjlaw2@eiu.edu](mailto:cjlaw2@eiu.edu)  
(217) 581-7240

## APPENDIX C

### Rights of Research Subjects

## RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

If you have any questions or concerns about the treatment of human participants in this study, you may call or write:

Institutional Review Board  
Eastern Illinois University  
600 Lincoln Ave.  
Charleston, IL 61920  
Telephone: (217) 581-8576  
E-mail: [eiuirb@www.eiu.edu](mailto:eiuirb@www.eiu.edu)

You will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject with a member of the IRB. The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, as well as lay members of the community not connected with EIU. The IRB has reviewed and approved this study

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I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time. I have been given a copy of this form.

---

Printed Name of Participant

---

Signature of Participant

---

Date

---

Signature of Principle Researcher

---

Date

## APPENDIX D

### Participation Flier



**You have been invited to participate in a  
research study conducted by Josephine Robinson,  
a masters student in the Department of  
Counseling and Student Development here at  
Eastern Illinois University**

**For questions, please feel free to contact me at 581-7850 or via email at [jrobinson@eiu.edu](mailto:jrobinson@eiu.edu)**

APPENDIX E  
Interview Protocol



Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
Age \_\_\_\_\_  
Major/Department \_\_\_\_\_

### Interview Protocols

\_\_\_\_ Introduction to study      \_\_\_\_ Confidentiality and right to withdraw from study

1. Why did you choose to attend Eastern Illinois University?
2. How did you feel when you were not accepted to Eastern Illinois University as a part of the normal application process?
3. How did you feel when you were accepted into the Gateway Program?
4. What were your expectations of the Gateway Program?
5. Were your expectations met with the Gateway Program?
6. In what ways do you feel your Gateway advisor provided you with enough information about your program of study?
7. What types of issues were discussed during your advisement session with your Gateway advisor that were not related to your academic interests?
8. Other than your Gateway and faculty advisors, what other individual(s) served as academic resources while you have been at EIU?
9. How prepared do you feel you were to compete with other students when you were released from the Gateway Program?
10. What were your expectations of your faculty advisor?
11. Were your expectations met with your faculty advisor?
12. Do you feel that your faculty advisor provided you with enough information about your program of study?
13. Explain what types of issues were discussed during your advisement sessions with your faculty advisor that were not related to academics?
14. Do you feel that you are the type of person who is self-motivated and persistent about attending school or has there always been a driving force (persons) pushing you toward earning a degree?

15. Describe the differences, if any, in advisement sessions with your faculty advisor and your Gateway advisor?
16. After meeting with your Gateway advisor, how did you feel about your future success at Eastern Illinois University?
17. Are there any aspects of your advisement sessions with your faculty advisor that you would change or you could?
18. How knowledgeable are you regarding resources available on campus and the requirements in your field of study?
19. Who contributed to that knowledge base and in what ways?
20. After meeting with your faculty advisor, how did you feel about your future enrollment at Eastern Illinois University?
21. Do you understand the concept of intrusive advisement?
22. In what ways, or to what extent, would you characterize your Gateway advisor to be "intrusive" with regard to your student/advisor relationship?
23. Is there anything about the academic advisement you have received from either your Gateway or faculty advisor that you would like to share that I have not addressed during this interview?

## APPENDIX F

Gateway Program Policies, Procedures and Agreements Forms

**GATEWAY PROGRAM  
PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security No. \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

**INTRODUCTION**

If you are academically qualified, you will be admitted to the Gateway Program on the condition that you agree to the terms listed below. **PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS DOCUMENT.** If you fail to comply with the terms of this agreement, you may be dismissed from the program and the university.

**TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT**

I will agree to the following terms as a condition of my admission to Eastern Illinois University and realize that my continuation at the University depends upon my academic performance and compliance with these terms.

1. Enroll as a full-time student in courses recommended by the designated Gateway Advisor, and will not change these courses without the consent of the Gateway advisor.
2. Participate in the one-and-one-half day summer "EIU Preview" and fall orientation programs.
3. Live in university-operated residence halls unless an exemption is approved.
4. Attend all classes as required and participate in the academic support activities, workshops, and seminars as recommended by the Gateway advisor.
5. Maintain regular contact with the designated Gateway advisor.
6. Participate in extra-curricular activities only with the approval of the Gateway advisor.

Gateway students are subject to the same standards of academic warning, probation, and dismissal as students who meet regular admission requirements specified for all entering freshmen.

The University reserves the right to change, add to, modify, or eliminate any of the above terms upon written notice to the student.

I agree to the condition as specified in this Agreement.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Student)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent or Legal Guardian)

## GATEWAY PROGRAM ADMISSION/EXIT CRITERIA

### Eastern Illinois University: Regular Admission Requirements

1. ACT of 18 and either upper quarter of high school class or 3.0 gpa
2. ACT of 10 and either upper half of high school class or 2.5 gpa
3. ACT of 22 and either upper three fourths of high school class or 2.25 gpa

### Gateway Program: Admission Requirements

1. Minimum ACT of 14
2. Minimum of a "C" average in high school
3. Demonstrated potential:
  - a. Submit a writing sample
  - b. Submit three letters of recommendation

### Gateway Program: Exit Requirements

1. Complete two consecutive semesters with a 2.0 or higher gpa with a minimum of 20 hours towards graduation (consistence is the key to college success). Example: Fall 2.50, Spring 2.75, cum gpa 2.65
2. If a student is in good standing after two semesters (cum. gpa of 2.0 or better) but he/she fails to meet the consecutive semester requirement, the student can be released if he/she completes a third semester with a 2.0 or higher gpa. Example: Fall (#1) 2.0, Spring 1.90 cum gpa 2.21, Fall (#2) 2.5
3. If a student is not in good standing after two semesters, but makes significant progress at the end of his third semester, he or she may be released at the discretion of the Gateway Staff and the Director of Minority Affairs.
4. Completes four semesters.
5. Be academically dismissed.
6. Be dismissed for disciplinary reason.
7. Be dismissed at the end of the first two semesters for failure to make significant progress.

Revised May 2004

GATEWAY PROGRAM  
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Disciplinary Policies and Procedures

A. Policies

The Gateway Program operates under a point system. Students who violate the rules and regulations of the program will receive points. Once a student reaches 21 or more points, his folder is sent automatically to the Gateway Advisory Committee for possible sanctions.

Points:

- Study Tables (1 point per hour)
- Weekly Appointment (2 points)
- Mandatory Workshops/Career Workshops (2 points)
- Mandatory meeting (3 points)

Point Deduction: In some instances, absences may be made up and corresponding points deducted at the discretion of the advisor.

Warning letters will be sent to the student at the following levels:

- 5 points
- 10 points (copy to parents)
- 15 points (according to the advisor's discretion)
  - Will require a student to appear before the Gateway Staff board for Review.
  - Failure to meet the recommendations of the Gateway Staff board may result in a student's folder being sent to the Gateway Program's Advisory Board.
  - Any further violations – the folder will go to the Advisory Board.

Additional Violations:

- Students who pledge a Greek letter organization, Sweethearts or Little Sister/Littler Brother organization will be automatically suspended from the program and thereby, the University.
- Excessive and continuous absences from classes may result in points being given and/or suspension from the program and thereby, the University.
- Disruptive and uncooperative behavior in study tables, classrooms, advisement meetings and/or other campus events may be punished by referral to the Judicial Affairs Office and/or suspension/dismissal from the program and thereby, the University.

### Gateway Probation:

Students who fail to receive above a 1.75 within a semester may be put on Gateway Probation for the following semester with specific grade, class and Study table requirements. Failure to meet these requirements will result in dismissal from the program and thereby, the University.

### B. Procedures

Gateway is a provisional admission program. Students admitted under this program do not meet normal admissions standards. Therefore, dismissal from the Gateway Program will result in dismissal from the University. If the program's rules and regulations, as reflected in the Gateway Agreement, the Point System, or the directions of the Gateway Advisor are seriously and/or continuously violated, the student's folder will be reviewed by the Gateway staff.

1. If the violation is serious or repeated, the Gateway staff will recommend a sanction(s) up to and including dismissal from the program to the Gateway Advisory Committee.
2. In the case of a potential suspension or an expulsion, the affected student will be notified in writing of the proposed sanctions and the time and date of the Gateway Advisory Committee meeting. The student may appear before and/or submit a written statement to the committee. The committee may recommend an appropriate sanction(s) up to and including dismissal from the program and thereby, the University.
3. If a sanction of suspension or dismissal from the program is approved by the committee, a written notice of the decision will be sent to both the student and his/her parents or guardian. The dismissal recommendation will be forwarded to the Vice Present for Academic Affairs. The student will have five working days to submit a written appeal of the committee's actions.
4. Students who accumulate more than 12 points prior to being released from the program will have a hold placed on their records until sufficient study table hours are completed to reduce total points to 12.

GATEWAY PROGRAM  
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

REQUIREMENTS FOR GATEWAY STUDENTS  
First Semester

1. Thirty-minute weekly intrusive advisement appointment.
2. Study Tables 4 hours per week, Sunday-Thursday, from 8-10 p.m. in Taylor Dining Hall. Daytime hours may be done at an alternative location.
3. Required Classes:  
GST 1000 (Study Skills)\*  
EIU 1111 (University Foundations)
4. Will be required or suggested to attend several workshops as well as other resources as necessary during the semester.
5. Grade reports are requested from professors at 5 and 10 weeks.
6. Students may not participate in or affiliate with Greek organizations.
7. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in the Peer Helper Program.

\*You may be exempt from this course depending on your ACT and/or Nelson-Denny Reading Test Score.



GATEWAY PROGRAM  
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

REQUIREMENTS FOR GATEWAY STUDENTS  
Second Semester

1. Twenty-minute weekly intrusive advisement appointment.
2. If the student receives a 2.65 gpa Fall semester and earns at least 10 hours toward graduation, he/she will be excused from study tables. If the individual appears on the D/F list at midterm, he/she will be required to attend 4 hours of study tables for the rest of the semester.
3. If the student received less than a 2.65 gpa Fall semester, he or she must return to study tables at the beginning of Spring semester. Students with a 2.25-2.64 the first semester will be required to do 4 study table hours per week. Students receiving a 2.0-2.24 the first semester will be required to do 6 hours. Students falling below a 2.0 will be required to do 8 hours of study tables until they are back in good standing.
4. Required Classes:  
    GST 1100 (8-week Career Seminar)
5. Grade reports are requested from professors at 5 and 10 weeks
6. Students in GATEWAY must live in University-operated residence halls.
7. Students may NOT participate in or affiliate with Greek Organizations.
8. In order to get out of GATEWAY at the end of spring semester, a student must have two (2) consecutive semesters of a 2.0 gpa or better and earn a minimum of 20 hours toward graduation.

GATEWAY PROGRAM  
PLEDGE AGREEEMNT

I WILL AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITION WHILE IN THE GATEWAY  
PROGRAM: I WILL NOT PLEDGE OR PARTICIPATE IN ANY GREEK  
MEMBERSHIP INTAKE PROCESS, SWEETHEARTS, NOR ANY LITTLE  
SISTER/LITTLE BROTHER ORGANIZATIONS.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

GATEWAY PROGRAM  
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

GATEWAY Agreement

The policies listed below are designed for students admitted to Eastern Illinois University under the Gateway Program. These policies are designed to enhance my academic success.

By signing this agreement, I am reaffirming my willingness to participate in the program and am committing myself to the time necessary for improving my academic skills. I understand this includes:

- \*Following the recommendations of the Gateway Academic Advisor
- \*Attending all classes
- \*Attending all program and courses necessary for achieving academic success.

I understand that failure to comply with Gateway guidelines could result in my name being submitted to the Gateway Advisory Committee and ultimate dismissal from the program and thereby, the University.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Gateway Academic Advisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Revised May 1996

GATEWAY PROGRAM  
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

AUTHORIZATION TO EXCHANGE OR REQUEST INFORMATION

Student information is confidential under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g. Therefore, your authorization is necessary to permit (a) the release of information concerning your academic progress to your parent(s), guardian, or designee and (b) to seek information about your academic progress from teachers and/or other University officials.

The Authorization to Exchange/Request Information is for the above stated purpose.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby authorize the Gateway Program at Eastern Illinois University to contact either or both my parent(s) guardian and teachers to exchange/request academic information.

I understand that this authorization is being used to allow my advisor and my parent(s) guardian or teachers to communicate and work together.

I understand that I have a right to be told what information was exchanged.

I understand that this authorization will be valid until I am formally released from the Gateway Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent(s) or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Revised April 1998

GATEWAY PROGRAM  
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
DOs AND DON'Ts OF GATEWAY

Dos

1. Do attend all regularly scheduled classes.
2. Do attend all regularly schedule appointments with your advisor.
3. Do attend all study table sessions the required number of hours that you are scheduled to be there.
4. Do communicate regularly with those people listed above if any type of problem or situation arises.
5. Do keep a copy of your entire course schedule with you at all times.
6. Do call or email your instructors prior to missing any classes due to illnesses. (No other absences will be excused.)
7. Do keep a calendar with you at all times so that you may be prepared to schedule any further upcoming events.
8. Do immediately inform you advisor of any work that you get back with a grade of C or lower on it.
9. Do check with your advisor before dropping any classes.

DON'Ts

1. Don't pledge or join any Greek or little sister organization as long as you are in the program.
2. Don't go to class late.
3. Don't come to study tables without specific materials to work on during the entire study time.
4. Don't make excuses for inappropriate behaviors. Just assume the responsibility that you have committed to.
5. Don't accumulate points.

Revised May 2004

## **GST 1100-Career Development Course**

### **Spring Semester**

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**Length of Course: A 50-minute session offered once a week for eight weeks.**

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### **Objectives**

**This course is designed to help individuals develop the skills needed to make wise decisions regarding their academic and career goals through:**

- **Developing greater self-awareness through analysis of various personality characteristics, interests, competencies, skills, aptitudes, and values.**
  - **Understanding the process of decision-making skills in choosing a major and/or career.**
  - **Understanding the process of career research and gain an appreciation of available career resources.**
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### **Topics Discussed**

#### **Self Assessment**

- **What motivates you?**
- **Recognizing your strengths**

#### **Career Research**

- **Exploring careers related to your interests**
- **Discovering opportunities in job shadowing & internships**
- **Learning about the career services available on campus**

#### **Career Planning**

- **Developing a four year career action plan**
  - **The benefits of networking in organizations & cultivating mentors**
  - **Tips for successful resumes & interviews**
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